

# CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Support. Advocate. Prevent.

Labor and Public Employees Committee Hearing  
March 9, 2023

Dear Members of Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Bridget Koestner and I am the Policy Manager at the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence. **We support S.B. No. 1178: An Act Expanding Connecticut Paid Sick Days.**

The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance) is the state's coalition of nine community based sexual assault crisis services centers who provide 365/24/7 crisis interventions including hotline/text/chat services, counseling, support groups, accompaniments in hospital, police and court settings, and advocacy while navigating complex criminal justice processes. In addition, The Alliance's attorneys on our Victim Rights Center of Connecticut (VRCCT) team provide no-cost legal counsel to victims and our Post-Conviction Victim Services (PCVS) victim advocates provide victim notification and services to victims whose offenders are being supervised by the Office of Adult Probation Sex Offender Supervision Unit and the Parole Special Management Unit. For 40 years, The Alliance has provided comprehensive, victim-centered and trauma-informed services to child, adolescent and adult survivors of sexual violence across our state.

We strongly support the inclusion of lines 241-247, which allow paid sick time to be taken by family members of victims of sexual assault. When people are sexually assaulted, it deeply impacts those who are closest to them. This is especially true in cases of child sexual abuse, as adults need to transport and accompany their child to various appointments. They also need to be responsive to other psychological and physical needs the victim may have. When experiencing traumas as significant as the aftermath of sexual assault and child sexual abuse, the last thing that family members should have to worry about is loss of income for that day or whether or not they will have time off approved.

We also support lines 261-267, which state that a written statement from the employees themselves should suffice as reasonable documentation. All victims of sexual assault should be able to make the choices that are best for them in the aftermath of that victimization. Being able to make decisions is often an important part in healing after a choice as significant as bodily autonomy was taken away from them when they were assaulted. This can include whether or not they engage with law enforcement, courts, hospitals, or counselors. Ensuring that they do not need documentation from a particular source supports the notion that victims should always be able to make these decisions.

